17 schoolchildren) were also killed. More than 150 persons received injuries. A large number of vehicles, both inside and outside the Chancery premises, were badly damaged. The Chancery building was also badly damaged. The attack on our Embassy was a dastardly terrorist attack perpetrated by the enemies of peace in Afghanistan and our region.

(c) and (d) Yes. A high-level team led by Secretary (West) in the Ministry of External Affairs visited Kabul from 7-10 July 2008. Foreign Secretary thereafter visited Kabul on 13-14 July 2008 along with other senior officers to review the situation arising out of the suicide attack. The security of the Embassy and its personnel has been augmented after the attack. The Afghan Government has been fully sensitised on providing adequate protection to Indian project workers and personnel in different parts of Afghanistan.

Agreement with Pakistan

683. SHRI Y.P. TRIVEDI:
SHRIMATI SUPRIYA SULE:
Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the specific issues discussed with Government of Pakistan during his recent visit to Pakistan;

(b) whether any agreement were signed between the two Governments as a result of the discussions held; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c) The External Affairs Minister visited Pakistan on 20-21 May 2008. He reviewed the Composite Dialogue encompassing (i) Peace and Security, including CBMs; (ii) Jammu and Kashmir; (iii) Siachen; (iv) Sir Creek; (v) Wullar Barrage/Tulbul Navigation Project; (vi) Terrorism and Drug Trafficking; (vii) Economic and Commercial Cooperation; and (viii) Promotion of Friendly Exchanges in Various Fields, with his counter-part the Foreign Minister of Pakistan. It was agreed to continue with the implementation of Cross-LoC CBMs with a view to enhancing interaction and cooperation across the LoC. The importance of ceasefire in place since November 2003 was reaffirmed and the commitment to fight terrorism reiterated. During his visit he also called on the then President of Pakistan General (Retd) Pervez Musharraf, the Prime Minister Mr. Yousuf Raza Gilani, and other leaders. An Agreement on Consular Access was signed during the visit.

Nyaya Panchayat Bill

684. SHRI SHANTARAM LAXMAN NAIK: Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has finalized the text of the Nyaya Panchayat Bill;

(b) if so, the essential features of the Bill; and

(c) by when the Bill is proposed to be introduced in Parliament?

THE MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) No, Sir. The Draft Bill, prepared by the Drafting Committee on the Nyaya Panchayats Bill was forwarded to the State Governments / UTs and the Central Ministries concerned for their comments. Based on the

comments received from different quarters, the Draft Bill was recast and circulated to Central Ministries concerned and State Governments/ UTs. Comments received are under consideration.

(b) The objective of the proposed Nyaya Panchayats Bill is to provide a sound institutionalized, alternative forum at the grassroots level with community involvement for dispute resolution through mediation, conciliation and compromise.

The Draft Nyaya Panchayats Bill provides for establishment of Nyaya Panchayats at the level of each Village Panchayat or a cluster of Village Panchayats. The Nyaya Panchayats are proposed to be constituted through the election of the Nyaya Panchas by people residing in the area to which the jurisdiction of the Nyaya Panchayats extends. Provisions are proposed for the reservation for women, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes to ensure their representation in the Nyaya Panchayats. The Draft Bill defines the civil, criminal and additional jurisdiction of Nyaya Panchayats. In the Draft Bill, conciliation is proposed as primary means of dispute resolution. Further, Nyaya Sahayaks, who will assist the Nyaya Panchayats in performing their function of dispute resolution, have been proposed. Nyaya Panchayats are proposed as separate and independent dispute resolution bodies, distinct from the Gram Panchayats.

(c) No firm date in this regard can be given as the Draft of the Nyaya Panchayats Bill is under consideration.

Indo-Iran joint commission meeting

685. SHRI SYED AZEEZ PASHA:
SHRI D. RAJA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether he had paid a two-day visit to Iran on July 29-30 to attend the India-Iran Joint Commission meeting;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether he had discussed the long pending Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline project during the visit; and

(d) if so, the details and the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) Yes. The visit to Iran on 29-30 July 2008 was to attend the NAM Ministerial meeting.

(c) Yes.

(d) The Iran-Pakistan-India (IPI) gas pipeline project was discussed during bilateral meetings with the President and Foreign Minister of Iran.

Attack on embassy in Kabul

686. SHRI SYED AZEEZ PASHA:
SHRI D. RAJA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Indian Embassy in Kabul was attacked recently and about 41 people including four Indian officials were killed;